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Setting the stage for repression

A new red scare is waiting in the wings

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There have been two great red scares in America in our century—one after World War I, led by Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer, the other after World War II, led by Senator Joseph McCarthy. But under the banner of a campaign against international terrorism and Soviet “disinformation” fronts, the Reagan Administration and the Republican Senate could be laying the groundwork right now for a new inquisition.

According to the Palmer-McCarthy formula for red scares, there are three essential components:

First, there must be some reds—preferably not so many as to mount an effective resistance, or so few as to make the red scare seem pointless or even laughable.

Second, there must be some important pinks and even purples, who can be discredited for their alleged ideological or personal links with the reds. Since American reds have never had much power or influence, the only point of red scares has been to get at “liberals” or “progressives.”

Third, there must be a group of committed zealots outside and inside Congress and the Administration who want to go after the reds, either as an end in itself or as a means to discredit the pinks and purples.

With Reagan's Presidential victory and the Republican capture of the Senate, some of these conditions have been met: The zealots are now present

both in Congress and in the Administration, and they seem eager to use a red scare to ferret out presumed subversives or to discredit the Carter Administration's policies on detente and human rights.

There is also a group of influential pinks and purples—among them Walter Mondale, Cyrus Vance, Andrew Young, and Senators Edward Kennedy and Paul Tsongas—who are likely to resist drastic changes in American foreign policy.

There is just one missing ingredient: a credible group of domestic reds who can be blamed for the pinks' apostasy. As one veteran witchhunter regretfully acknowledged, the American Communist Party, with 4,000 members at most, is virtually “useless” as an agent of Soviet intentions.

But with the aid of journalist-novelists Arnaud de Borchgrave and Robert Moss, authors of *The Spike*, the internal security lobby has hit upon a new menace: the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS). Along with Morton Halperin's Center for National Security Studies, William Miller's Center for International Policy, and *Mother Jones* magazine, IPS is seen as what de Borchgrave and Moss call a “Soviet disinformation front.”

Disinformation fronts plant false stories about Soviet or Soviet bloc intentions or capacities. A typical example, according to de Borchgrave, is the denial of Soviet military superiority over the United States. Or they print false stories about a nation's military or intelligence services to weaken its resistance to the Soviet threat. Speaking of recent efforts, de Borchgrave

was the sabotage of Western intelligence services through media exposure.”

The disinformation danger allows an expansion of the field of internal subversion, from the usual organizations that advocate the violent overthrow of the Government to think tanks, policy groups, and publications. With the communist Left all but invisible, it provides the internal security lobby with a reason for being.

In anticipation of a Reagan victory, this lobby has been actively campaigning for some time to place internal security high on the new Administration's agenda. It has already encountered some success. While a recurrence of the McCarthy era is not imminent, the Republican Senate has already created a new Subcommittee on Internal Security and Terrorism, and the Reagan Administration has appointed several prominent members of the internal security lobby to key posts.

Major components of the internal security lobby include the conservative Right, the agents and supporters of right-wing dictatorships, former intelligence officers ousted in the 1975-1978 cleanup, and intellectuals and journalists from conservative think tanks and publications. It also includes key figures in Congress and the Administration.

The members of this lobby share an aversion to any form of detente between the United States and the Soviet Union. They call not only for renewed

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